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FOOD ADMINISTRATION
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FACT SHEET ON CORN FOR WAR INDUSTRIES

THE PROBLEM:

To increase the movement of corn from farms to elevators. Once in the elevators, it soon will be on its way to refineries for processing into vitally needed products of war - cornstarch, industrial sirup, and dextrin. Several refineries already have closed for lack of sufficient corn and others are operating on limited schedules. Unless something is done - and done now - factories depending on these corn products to make such war indispensables as explosives .. penicillin .. sulfa drugs .. surgical dressings .. adhesives, etc., also will face complete shutdown or serious curtailment of operations.

Even with the increased importance of corn for industry in wartime, only about 10 percent of the Nation's huge annual corn crop of 3 billion bushels is going into commercial uses. However, that 10 percent must flow to industry without interruption to help keep our war machine running and to meet civilian needs.

WHY THE NEED:

Receipts of corn at primary markets have dropped in recent weeks from a high of 10 million bushels per week in January to a low of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million bushels a week in late March. This drastic decline occurred in spite of a record production of corn, exceeding 3 billion bushels in 1943. If the Nation's dozen or so refineries are to keep factories supplied with corn sufficient to make these critical war materials they have to get it from the elevators. If the elevators get it, they must get it from the farms.

The need is right now - more specifically, TODAY. Every effort should be made, and made quickly, to strongly urge farmers to get corn to the elevators. Farmers must be convinced of the absolute indispensability of their product to the war program, and shown most emphatically that their cooperation is needed TODAY to keep the refineries turning out corn products - and the factories turning out articles of war necessity. It is a chain of inter-dependence. The elevators depend on the farmers, the refineries on the elevators, the factories on the refineries - and our boys on the fighting fronts depend on all of us to provide them with products they must have.

Farmers already have demonstrated their patriotism by answering, in a big way, the call for increased production. The failure to get corn from the farms into channels where it is most needed, however, is actually defeating a major part of the program for which the greater production was sought.

PRODUCTS OF WAR NECESSITY DEPENDENT ON CORN:

Corn is going directly to the battle fronts, not only in explosives, drugs, adhesives, etc., but in clothing and shoes for our fighting men, in paper shipping containers of all kinds, corn products, fibrous glass cloth, printing inks, stationery, rubber, asbestos, vitamin C, riboflavin, structural installation board, gypsum board; all direct materials of war.

Corn is on the war production line, too, - in starches necessary as core binder for use in making copper, aluminum, magnesium, bronze brass, steel, iron, castings and forgings, as a fiber in the conversion of bauxite to alumina; and as a flotation reagent in magnesium production. As a mold for engines, it makes a finer casting. That saves time in machining the engine casting, saves labor and saves metal.

The cotton textile industry is the greatest single user of cornstarch, using more than 280 million pounds annually in the weaving and finishing of fabrics. The starch serves to make the kinky threads easier to handle.

More than 200 million pounds of cornstarch is required annually in the finishing of many kinds of paper, paper boxes, "boxboard", and V-boxes, which are used for overseas shipments to our fighting forces.

There are scores of other uses - of lesser essentiality, of course, but important just the same. Corn sirup, for example, is used in the manufacture of the army K ration.

BACKGROUND:

The problem is more or less a repetition of the one which existed last spring, but this year it is not only more critical but it is with us much earlier.

There was a record production of corn last year, but demands for corn as food and feed are extremely heavy. At the same time, there is a special need for approximately 11 million bushels per month to keep factories supplied with the starch, sirup and dextrin necessary to manufacture products vitally needed in the war program.

In mid-March, officials of the War Food Administration conferred in Washington with representatives of the corn industry to discuss the problem and determine a course of action. A week later, WFA issued Food Distribution Order No. 96 (effective March 24) requiring country and terminal elevators to set aside 35 percent of their current stocks of yellow and mixed corn for sale to designated purchasers; requiring country elevators to set aside 35 percent of their future receipts; and requiring terminal elevators to set aside a similar quantity of their future receipts from sources other than country elevators.

The order applied to 124 counties in 5 Corn Belt States - Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska, the principal corn-producing States in the Midwest.

On April 1, representatives of the corn industry said that little had been accomplished by the order thus far, since very meager quantities of corn had been delivered to the grain elevators. They said the situation is becoming progressively more acute, that more plants may have to close within a matter of days unless something is done - and done now. Effective on that date, the set aside percentage was increased to 60 percent.